

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A recording/viewing support apparatus for supporting recording or viewing of a program selected by a user as a desired program from among programs scheduled to be aired as digital broadcasts, said apparatus comprising:

program specifying information obtaining means for obtaining program specifying information that specifies the desired program based on an operation by the user;

weather forecast information obtaining means for obtaining, based on the program specifying information, weather forecast information for a relevant weather at a location where the digital broadcast will be received during a broadcast time period of the desired program as relevant weather forecast information;

determining means for determining, based on the relevant weather forecast information, whether or not the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade the desired program in image quality or sound quality; and

notifying means for giving, when said determining means determines that the relevant weather will be bad, a notice of a possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of the desired program.

2. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

searching means for searching, when said determining means determines that the relevant weather will be bad, for a same program to be aired at a different time, which is a program that is equal in content to the desired program and is scheduled to be aired in a different time period from the broadcast time period of the desired program; and

same program information displaying means for displaying information that specifies the same program to be aired at the different time found by said searching means.

3. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said program specifying information obtaining means includes:

receiving means for receiving the digital broadcast and generating a transport stream;

program information displaying means for displaying a program list based on program sequence information included in the transport stream; and

input operation means, operated by the user for selecting the desired program from among programs shown in the program list, for obtaining the program specifying information based on the operation by said user.

4. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said program specifying information obtaining means includes:

receiving means for receiving the digital broadcast and generating a transport stream;

program information displaying means for displaying a program list based on program sequence information included in the transport stream; and

input operation means, operated by the user for selecting the desired program from among programs shown in the program list, for obtaining the program specifying information based on the operation by said user; and

wherein said searching means searches for the same program to be aired at the different time by using the program sequence information.

5. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein:

when said searching means finds the same program to be aired at the different time, said weather forecast information obtaining means obtains weather forecast information for the weather during a broadcast time period of the same program to be aired at the different time as new relevant weather forecast information;

when the new relevant weather forecast information is obtained, said determining means determines, based on the new relevant weather forecast information, whether or not the weather during the broadcast time period of the same program to be aired at the different time will be so bad as to degrade the desired program in image quality or sound quality; and

said notifying means gives the notice of the possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of the same program to be aired at the different time during the broadcast time period when the weather is determined as bad.

6. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said searching means searches analog broadcast programs in addition to digital broadcast programs for the same program to be aired at the different time.

7. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes receiving means for receiving a data broadcast, and obtains the relevant weather forecast information from the received data broadcast.

8. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes interfacing means for accessing the Internet, and obtains, through said interfacing means, the relevant weather forecast information via the Internet.

9. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when a probability of precipitation included in the relevant weather forecast information is larger than a predetermined value, said determining means determines that the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade the desired program in image quality or sound quality.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising storing means for storing correlation data that relates a probability of precipitation to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of the digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value,

wherein said determining means calculates, based on the correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the probability of precipitation included in the relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously presented) A recording/viewing support apparatus for supporting recording or viewing of a program selected by a user as a desired program from among programs scheduled to be aired as digital broadcasts, said apparatus comprising:

program specifying information obtaining means for obtaining program specifying information that specifies the desired program based on an operation by said user;

weather forecast information obtaining means for obtaining, based on the program specifying information, weather forecast information for a relevant weather at a location where the digital broadcast will be received during a broadcast time period of the desired program as relevant weather forecast information;

storing means for storing correlation data that relates the weather forecast information to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of the digital broadcast is smaller than a predetermined level threshold value; and

notifying means for obtaining the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the relevant weather forecast information, and notifying the user of the obtained receive level degradation probability as information which is indicative of a possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of the desired program.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes receiving means for receiving a data broadcast, and obtains the relevant weather forecast information from the received data broadcast.

16. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes interfacing means for accessing the Internet, and obtains, through said interfacing means, the relevant weather forecast information via the Internet.

17. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein when a probability of precipitation included in the relevant weather forecast information is larger than a predetermined value, said determining means determines that the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade the desired program in image quality or sound quality.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously presented) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising storing means for storing correlation data that relates a probability of precipitation to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of the digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value,

wherein said determining means calculates, based on the correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the probability of precipitation included in the relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade the desired program in image quality or sound quality.

20. (Cancelled)